

Social and Economic Effectiveness Monitoring

The purpose of the Social and Economic Monitoring Module is to assess the social and economic effectiveness of federal forest management under the Northwest Forest Plan. During 2002 the Social and Economic Effectiveness Monitoring Team continued the development and refinement of an appropriate monitoring strategy.

Through mid-2002, the module had been charged with answering the ROD evaluation question: *Are local communities and economies experiencing positive or negative changes that may be associated with federal forest management?*

In late 2002 the module's scope was expanded to include an additional evaluation question from the ROD: *Are predictable levels of timber and non-timber resources available and being produced?*

Development of the monitoring program has progressed as a multi-stage process. From 1999 through mid-2002, Phases I and II were completed in cooperation with the University of Washington. The Phase I report (Sommers 2001) reviews available information and recommends developing a community-level model and data collection strategy. Phase II (Sommers et al. 2002, Jackson et al. 2002) focused on developing a monitoring option capable of identifying causal links between federal forest management and local economic and social change.

Peer review during Phase II noted a need to obtain additional or other data types in order to productively describe the social and economic effectiveness of the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP). Accordingly, beginning early in 2002 the team explored additional options for:

- Delineating and describing small, local communities across the entire planning area (Donoghue and Haynes 2002)
- Using mixed-methods case studies to adequately describe complex socioeconomic changes and relationships in sample local communities (e.g. Yin 1994)
- Monitoring forest actions (for example, contracting, hiring, and grant disbursement) with a greater potential to affect local communities than traditionally measured forest outputs (Moseley and Wilson 2002).

The Monitoring Team continued close coordination with REO executives and managers throughout 2002. Expanded outreach initiated during the year also sought feedback on monitoring needs from Provincial Advisory Committees, and regional and unit-level planners and line officers from the Forest Service and BLM.

Planned work during 2003 includes:

- Continued outreach to National Forest System and BLM unit managers and PACs, in order to better understand information needed by local units
- Updating block group aggregate delineations to reflect changes to Census block groups in the 2000 U.S. decennial Census, and associated community characterizations

- Finalizing data collection and analysis methods for the 2004 report
- Initiating data collection and analysis for the 2004 report
 - Timber and non-timber forest production
 - Agency employment
 - Stakeholder feedback
 - Reviews of existing literature describing NWFP social and economic effectiveness
- Implementing a monitoring pilot using case-study methods in sample communities and forests across the planning area.

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